'Cyclone In Calico' Reviewed at UDC Meeting

The Appomattox Chapter of the United Daughters of the Confederacy met last Thursday evening in the home of Mrs. C. S. Jenkins. Mrs. Jenkins, Miss Kate Franklin and Mrs. W. T. Steele were co-hostesses.

Mrs. Edwin Cawthorne gave a review of the book, "Cyclone in Calico." The review was as follows:

"Nine Brown Baker, the author of Cyclone in Calico, grew up in Kansas and after a disastrous encounter with higher learning she fled to a remote corner of Colorado where she taught in a one room school. In 1915, she married Sidney Baker and since then has traveled in South America and lived in Omaha, Chicago and Brooklyn.

"The beek we are reviewing tonight is a biographical sketch of the life of Mary Ann Bickerdyke and her courageous work with the Federal Army in the War Between the States.

"It begins on a hot Illinois Sabbath in May 1861, as Dr. Edward Beecher made his dramatic entrance into the Galesburg Congregational Church. While this is not dealth with in our book tonight, we all know the Beecher family was a most illustrious one, the father being Lyman Beecher, an older brother, Henry Ward Beecher, and the sister, Harriet Beecher Stowe.

"This family did more than any other to arouse the animosities of the Northern people against the South and slavery. The men by their eloquence in the pulpit, their published articles and Mrs. Stowe by her famous novel, Uncle Tom's Cabin, inflamed their people against slavery and caused them to go all out in their efforts to support the National Government in its fight to subdue the South and abolish slavery.

"Dr. Beecher opened his service by beginning with a prayer of Thansgiving thanking God for the blessings of health, food and raiment. After a resounding Amen he took from his pocket a piece of paper informing his congregation that his morning text did not come from the Word. Instead, he proposed to read them a letter. The letter was from a Dr. Benjamin Woodward, a young Galesburg physician who had answered Lincoln's call for volunteers when Sumter fell. They were now stationed at Cairo, Illinois.

"The letter was a harrowing description of suffering and death among boys from all over the state as well as Galesburg boys. Dr. Beecher read slowly, sparing them nothing of the horrow. It was the more distressing because of the contrast created by his opening prayer. Here these people were sitting comfortably and safe while young men who had known these comforts only a few short weeks before were suffering and dying in broken- down army tents, laying on rotten straw, calling through fever - blackened lips for water.

"When Dr. Beecher had finished reading the letter, he asked for a discussion as to what could be done to improve the situation in Cairo.

"Immediately members of his congregation began contributing medicines, clean linens and food, about $500 worth in a half and hour. Many had suggestions as to what more they could do and it was finally decided that a sensible, level headed person should be sent to see that the supplies were properly used. The person suggested was Mrs. Mary Ann Bickerdyke, a widow with two half-grown boys. There was no doubt in anyone's mind: Mary Ann Bickerdyke had every qualification the pastor had demanded. Of course, it was true that she was a woman and there were Army regulations porhibiting women on the post, but everyone in Galesburg knew that when Mary Ann Bickerdyke took sides, her side won.

"Her brief reply was that she had been given a job to do and as it was the Lord's work, 'there ain't nobody big enough to stop me.'

"The only request she made was that someone look after her boys while she was away.

"On the morning of June 9, 1861, Mrs. Bickerdyke arrived at Cairo, where she was met by Dr. Woodward. He explained to her that he had obtained a pass for her for the day but she would have to leave the post before sunset. It was not until March 21, 1866, that Mrs. Bickerdyke resigned her job and departed from her courageous work with the Army of the North.

"As she examined conditions in each of the three regimental hospital tents, Mary Ann was shocked that conditions were worse than the doctor had written in his letter but they were so much worse that she could well understand why Dr. Woodward had not been able to describe them in his letter.

"She found ten men crowded into the first tent with only straw pallets for beds; mud floor, swarms of bluebottle flies circling over the wounded, and the patients laying in shirts and underpants filthy with vomit and rank with perspiration. The other tents were no better.

"The first job to be done was to get some able-bodied men to help her in moving the sick from the filthy tents and giving them all baths and clean clothes. It was quite surprising how many men offered their assistance when Mrs. B. told them she would give them fried chicken for supper instead of half-raw salt pork, boiled white beans and hardtack. This was only one of the many ways she succeeded in going over the heads of the so-called 'Big Brass' in the Army in getting things done.

"The worse job was cleaning the tents and getting them ready for the wounded and sick. Mrs. Bickerdyke found a spade and while the men were getting scrubbed she began her job of shoveling filthy mud outside rustling up new straw and spreading it with clean sheets, doing what she could to make the wounded comfortable and conditions within the tents as sanitary as possible.

"Near sunset Dr. Woodward reminded her that it would be time for the unset gun soon, at which time she would have to be gone. To this she repled, 'Did you think I was going back to Galesburg? This is not a one-day job and I'm staying till it's done," which was exactly what she did.

"As the days and weeks went slowly by, Mary Ann became a mother to all the soldiers and was loved by everyone of them, but it was not surprising that she was less popular with the 'brass.' They thought she pampered the soldiers. On one occasion, one of the soldiers, who was too weak to eat but had a tremendous craving for eggs, was given a half a dozen to keep under his pillow. The head doctor found out, removed the eggs and left the soldier in tears. Mother Bickerdyke, as she was now called by her boys brought the boy a whole bucket of eggs and threatened the doctor with bodily injury if they were moved. They stayed!

"On her second day at camp, Mrs. B. learned that Dr. Woodward's hospital was only one of six and the other five were more wretched than the first. The doctor who was in charge of the others was a civilian who visited his camp when his private practice permitted. Mrs. B. was in the midst of her cleaning-up activities in one of these particular tens when the doctor turned up on his leisurely rounds. In the presence of his patients, Mrs. Bickerdyke told the doctor exactly what she thought of him as well as his hospital. The physician went straight to headquarters, where purple with rage, he shouted that a 'Cyclone in Calico' had invaded his hospital and turned it upside down. Brig. General Benjamin Prentiss was a sensible, hard headed man but he could not make head or tails of the doctor's complaint as this was the first he had heard of Mary Ann Bickerdyke. His interview with her is not recorded, but in after years Mrs. B. said simply, 'I talked sense to him.' From that time on she had semi-official standing in the camp.

"In February, 1862, bitter fighting took place in freezing sleet before the Stars and Stripes were run up over Fort Donelson, at noon on the 16th day of February. It was almost impossible for stretcher parties to bring in the wounded, so the unburied dead froze quietly and the wounded tried desperately to move their tortured limbs about to try to keep the blood circulating in their bodies.

"The City of Memphis, one of the five river steamers the Santiary Commission had recently leased as hospital ships, waited for the wounded on the opposite side of the river. Mrs. Bickerdyke was aboard waiting to do her job. When the living men were brought aboard she had nourishment ready for every single man. Toward night, Mother B. packed a backet with food and made her rounds to the hospital tents on shore, but when she returned toward midnight, she was uneasy. The searchers had sworn that every man alive had been brought in but she thought perhaps in their haste they had assumed death where life still flickered. She could not sleep until she was sure.

"In his tent on the field, Colonel John Logan tossed on his cot and cursed a minor wound that kept him awake, too. He got up for a drink of water and looked out to see how the weather situation was. The moon was shining so as to dimly light the darkness of the nearby woods. Then the Colonel saw another light close to the ground that flitted from spot to spot. He thought who in the world could be so low that they would rob the dead after they lost their life in battle. Being enraged by such a thought, he quickly roused his sleeping orderly, commanding him to find that man and bring him in. After quite sometime, the orderly returned and he had Mrs. Bickerdyke with him. She told the Colonel she was mighty glad he had sent the orderly because it was a real job combing the woods by herself. She said she had to satisfy herself that there wasn't anyone alive left out in the cold, dark woods. Convinced of this, she could now get some sleep.

"Mrs. Bickerdyke did not return to her Cairo post. It seemed plain to her that she was needed closer to the battlefields and that was exactly where she stayed.

"In January, 1863, Mrs. B. moved to Memphis to render her services there. The hospital was rapidly filling mostly with typhoid and pneumonia cases shipped from Grant's headquarters. Mother Bickerdyke, who was a practicitioner of botanic medicine, which prescribed baths, fresh foods and fresh air, was not satisfied with the diet of the sick men. She asked for a 20-day furlough to go North and bring back some decent milk and eggs for her boys. The doctor in charge made much fun of this idea, as he could not see how she could possibly bring back milk and eggs that would remain fresh on her journey. When asked by the General how she expected to keep them from spoiling she quickly replied, 'Now, that's a sensible question. If the doctor hada asked me instead of snickering over it, I'da told him. It's easy, General. I'll bring back cows and hens alive.' And that was what she did. Before her 20 days were up, Mrs. B. was on return route with 100 cows and 1,000 hens being shipped to Memphis in small consignments. Thereafter, there was an abundance of fresh milk and eggs for hospital use.

"Mrs. B. followed General Sherman to Kingston, to Altoona Pass, to Kennesaw Mt. and Marietta within sight of Atlanta's church steeples. Mrs. Mary A. Livermore, who was the head of the Chicago Santitary Commission, wrote: 'I despair of giving any account of the work accomplished by Mary Ann Bickerdyke from April to November of 1864. What it is to follow an army when there is no fighting can only be understood by those who have experienced it. What it was to follow Sherman's army in that Atlanta campaign when it fought every foot of the way, to follow with only the one aim of ministering to the exhausted, the wounded, the dying.. tihs canot be described.'

"After Atlanta was captured Mary Ann went to Chicago, where the Sanitary Commission sent her on a speaking tour. One Sunday she went to hear the famous Henry Beecher, brother of her own Galesburg pastor. She expected to slip into the church unnoticed, but she was recognized and the congregation crowded around her after the service eager for a word from such a celebrity. Someone asked if she would not give a talk to the Plymouth Congregation to which she agreed, but just to the women. Speaking in the church's Sunday school room, she gave a realistic account of battle, the piles of amputated limbs, the blowflies, the gangrene, the filthy bandages that could not be changed because there was nothing to replace them.

"She paused and looked considerngly at her audience, which was shaken by the firightful picture she had painted. 'I reckon I put it pretty strong, didn't I? Maybe we better talk about something nicer for a minute.' As woman usually do, they got off on the subject of clothes and the many starched petticoats the ladies were wearing to hold out their dresses. 'Seeing you Brooklyn ladies,' she said, 'I reckon every one of you is wearing at least one white muslin petticoat. Well how many are wearing as many as three, four or five?' Nearly every hand went up.

"Mother B. began her speech. 'All right, ladies. Every one of you is sitting there in five muslin petticoats .. and I have to tie up a dying boys stump in a piece of gunnysack. Four petticoats is enough for any decent modest Congregational woman. There's no one here but us women. Ladies of Brooklyn, in the name of my boys, drop that fifth petticoat.' Later the hideous, running sores of Andersonville Prison survivors were bound with strips from the Brooklyn ladies' petticoats.

"When Gen. Lee surrendered here at Appomattox on Palm Sunday, April 9th, Mary Ann Bickerdyke's job did not change, except that it was harder. By the first of May, Mary Ann had reduced the number of patients from 2,000 to 200. Her work continued until March 21, 1866, when she resigned.

"She came out of the war a few months before her 49th birthday. During the 35 years that remained to her, she continued to devote her energies—tirelessly, unselfishly, efficiently—to a variety of good works, most of them concerned with her boys now turned veterans. Mrs. Bickerdyke spent her last months in Bunker Hill, Kansas, with her ... On the afternoon of November ... she started to cross the room, ... fell to the floor. On Friday eve... November 8, 1901, she quietly ... easily passed from this earth, ... through her courage on the ... field she won for women nurses ... their vital role, the recognition ... have in our armed forces today.

(Editor's note: "Cyclone in Calico" has been placed in the Appo... tox County Library by the local ... D. C., in memory of the late ... Ann Caldwell).

CITE NEED FOR NEW TB ROSPITAL

Basic needs for a state tuberculosis hospital in southeastern Virginia were discussed at a meeting this week at Old Point Comfort of a special committee of the Virginia Tuberculosis Association with a group of citizens interested in TB control from the lower tidewater and eastern shore communities.

Results of the three-hour discussion will be conveyed to the executive committee of the Virginia Tuberculosis Association at its meeting within the next few weeks, Thomas Pinckney, VTA president, said today. He added that the conference this week produced unanimity of opinion on the very real need for a state institution to care for the large number of tuberculosis victims in the southeastern section.

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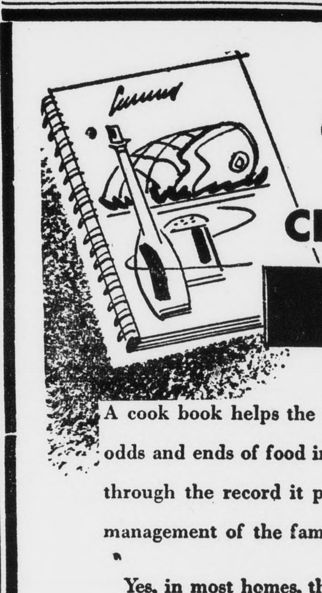

Cook Books AND CHECK BOOKS

A cook book helps the thrifty housewife to transform odds and ends of food into tasty dishes. A check book, through the record it provides, helps in the financial management of the family's funds.

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Homemakers Items

...Virginians are taking their re... seriously these days, says ...Catherine Peery, V. P. I. Ag... Extension Service rural ...specialist.

...llowing the lead of medical ...lists who recognize the need ...fun as well as vitamins to main... health, Virginia rural home... have decided to bring fun ...family together again. In sev... counties, home demonstration ...met recently to plan a home ...community recreation program. ...are especially concerned with ...the energy of young ...into wholesome activity. They ...to strengthen family ties and ...the greatest pleasure out of ...life.

...singing together, story ...reading aloud, dramatics, ...such as crafts and collect... family outings, nature hikes, ...celebrating birthdays and holidays are some of the activities which they consider important. Take your family to the woods in the fall, go camping or fishing together in the summer, visit one of Virginia's historic sites, and you will have not only the pleasure of the trip but also the happy memory for a lifetime, Miss Perry points out. "Families who play together stay together," is the slogan of the V. P. I. Agricultural Extension Service recreation program.

Have fun with your neighbors, Miss Peery advises. Let everybody have a part in planning and carrying out the fun. To be sure that all goes well, she says, have four committees: theme and invitation, decoration and clean-up, games and entertainment, and refreshments. Keep the small fry busy passing napkins and doing other simple jobs. They will catch the team spirit early. For the grown-ups, swap jobs for different parties so that nobody gets in a rut.

You don't have to spend a lot of money to have fun with your family and friends, Miss Peery says. It's being together that adds up—not the cost.

POWER OF WOMEN CAN HELP CENSUS

The Bureau of the Census will "never underestimate the power of a woman" .. especially during the 1954 Census of Agriculture to be conducted during November in Virginia.

"Farm homemakers can be a tremendous help in making this a complete and accurate farm census," says Census Director Robert W. Burgess. "They can help cut costs and save time."

He suggests that homemakers can help their husbands fill questionnaires, look up records, and answer census takers' questions if their husbands are absent. Wives' answers to some of the questions usually will be just as accurate as their husbands'.

Sections of the questionnaire probably will be of special interest to some homemakers. The section on facilities and equipment asks whether the place has a telephone, piped vision, and home freezer.

Farm labor and off-farm work sections include questions about labor by members of the family other than the farm operator.

Burgess also points out that home economists, clothing and household equipment manufacturers, and other individuals and organizations that serve homemakers often obtain information from farm census totals.

Any information released is in the form of totals for counties, states, or larger areas. Facts about individuals and farm are confidential.

SLOW SPEED KEEPS PICKER LOSSES LOW

Use that low gear on your tractor for picking corn if you want to keep field losses low.

That's the advice of G. D. Kite, Associate Agriculture engineer at V. P. I. He says that even at low speeds losses will run as high as 5 or 6 per cent when the corn picker is in good adjustment. But higher tractor speeds will easily double these field losses.

Average speed of the two-row contestants at the 1953 National Corn Picking Contest was 1.84 miles per hour.

County Line

County Line, Oct. 25.- The storm of Oct. 15 did only slight damage here. A wonderful rain fell, which was much needed.

People in this section are busy sowing wheat.

Mr. and Mrs. Dan Irby and girls were in Farmville Saturday.

D. B. Irby, of the U. S. Navy, spent the week-end at home.

Mrs. Mike Johnson spent the week-end at home.

Mr. and Mrs. Richard Nash and Mrs. George Dixon visited Mr. Dixon at the hospital last Tuesday.

Miss Lorene Stanley spent the week-end with her mother in Lynchburg.

Mrs. Shirling, who has been making her home here the past months has returned to her home in North Carolina.

Mr. Edd Moses has returned from the hospital and is getting on very well.

Mr. and Mrs. Milton Nash, of Williamsburg spent the week-end in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Henry Mann.

Mr. and Mrs. Fred Jones and daughter, Freda, called in the home of W. V. Jones Friday night.

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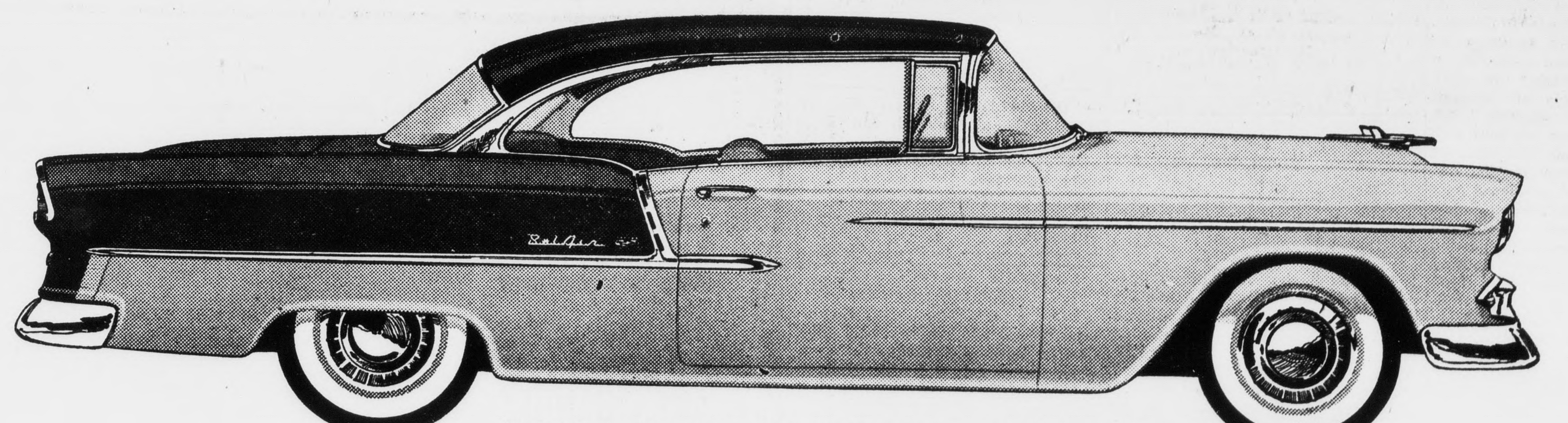

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